



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
PANEL TO REVIEW THE V-22 PROGRAM
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April 13, 2001

Chairman
John R. Dailey

Panel Members
Norman R. Augustine
James B. Davis
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Executive Secretary
Gary J. Gray

Subject: Minutes of the Panel to Review the V-22 Program
Open Meeting, March 9, 2001

On March 9, 2001, the Panel to Review the V-22 Program conducted an open meeting for public comment in the Arlington Ballroom of the Crowne Plaza Hotel located at 1489 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, Virginia 22202. The meeting began at 1:00 pm and concluded at 3:02 pm. Panel member attendees were: General John R. Dailey, USMC (Retired), Chairman; Mr. Norman R. Augustine; General James B. Davis, USAF (Retired); and Dr. Eugene E. Covert. Panel staff attendees were: Mr. Gary J. Gray, Executive Secretary; Colonel Rick Schwartz, USMC; Colonel Carl A. Steel, USAF; Mr. Bryan D. O'Connor (Consultant), Dr. Hector O. Nevarez, and Mr. Douglas Y. K. Pang. Interested individuals and members of the press were present for the proceedings.

Mr. Gray opened the meeting, explained the purpose of the panel and introduced the Chairman. The Chairman introduced the members of the Panel and then turned the meeting back over to Mr. Gray. Mr. Gray then introduced the staff members of the Panel and then announced the first presenter.

Mr. John Douglass, President and CEO of Aerospace Industries Association, discussed the civil merits of tiltrotor technology. Mr. Douglass described how tiltrotor technology is a possible solution to congested airways and noise reduction at our national airports with only minor modifications to the existing facilities. In conclusion, Mr. Douglass asked the panel to consider the V-22 program in "a broad national perspective..."

Congressman Bob Filner, California (D) spoke next. Congressman Filner addressed the V-22's safety record, citing the crashes in November and April. Congressman Filner then stated, "If the most experienced officers are unable to control the V-22, who exactly should we turn to?" Finally, Congressman Filner put his concerns of the V-22's safety in the context of its possible operation out of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar and over the populated areas of San Diego County.

Mr. Frank Gaffney, President, Center for Security Policy spoke next. Mr. Gaffney's statement supported continuance of the V-22 program. He asked the panel to consider two points that in his mind are compelling arguments to continue 1) the Osprey as a "Revolution in Military Affairs"

and "skipping a generation" of weapon systems and 2) the Osprey as an engine of National economic growth.

Professor Daniel P. Schrage, Ph. D., Director Center of Excellence in Rotocraft Technology (CERT), Georgia Institute of Technology spoke next. Professor Schrage addressed "why tilt rotor aircraft are not only the most productive, but also the safest V/STOL (vertical/short takeoff and landing) aircraft." He provided technical information on the increased safety and maneuverability of tiltrotor aircraft.

Mr. Brian J. Alexander, Esq., Kreindler & Kreindler, representing several families who lost relatives in the April crash spoke next. Mr. Alexander alleged that the contractors were negligent in their obligation to test the aircraft prior to delivery. Mr. Alexander also questioned the Judge Advocate General's report finding of human factor/pilot error as the cause of the April crash. In conclusion, Mr. Alexander stated that the families he represents do not want to have the V-22 program cancelled, but want the program delayed so that the manufacturer can conduct further testing and correct deficiencies.

Mr. Grady Wilson was scheduled to speak next, but asked that he be removed from the schedule.

Mr. James Furman, Esq., Byrd, Davis & Eisenberg, LLP, representing the Gruber and Brow families who lost their husbands in the April crash, spoke next. Mr. Furman expressed concerns over the safety of the aircraft and took umbrage to reports citing the cause of the April crash to pilot error. Mr. Furman stated that tiltrotor technology is in its "infancy" and that the families are not asking for the program to be cancelled.

Mrs. Stacy Nelson, wife of crew chief William Nelson followed. Mrs. Nelson began by stating that the families of the Marines killed in the Osprey accidents are not "program killers", that the families want to make sure that the Osprey is made safe. She suggested that the aircraft be returned to the companies that built it for further testing and evaluation before it is introduced to the fleet. Mrs. Nelson then spoke of her husband and how his death has affected the family.

Mrs. Donna Harter, mother of Kelly Keith was scheduled to speak next, but was not present.

Mrs. Connie Gruber, wife of co-pilot Brooks Gruber spoke next. Mrs. Gruber told of her husband's skill as a pilot and refuted allegations that human factor/pilot error caused the crash that took her husband, asking that her husband and other crewmembers be exonerated from any wrong doing. Mrs. Gruber made allegations that the manufacturers knowingly delivered an unsafe aircraft.

Mrs. Trish Brow, wife of pilot John Brow spoke next. Mrs. Brow stated that it is her objective to clear her husband's name and to ask the Panel "to stop the V-22 from killing the pilots that fly it." Mrs. Brow spoke of her husband's commitment to the V-22 and the Marine Corps and questioned why the program seemed rushed. Mrs. Brow cited testing that was cut short and manufacturing discrepancies that she had discussed with her husband. In her final remarks on the program, Mrs. Brow asked that if the Osprey program is continued, that it be adequately funded and tested so that it does not kill any more Marines.

Mr. Dennis Eckenrod, Chief Pilot for American Airlines, was scheduled to speak next, but asked to be removed from the schedule.

William T. Healy, Esq., Healy & Studwell Law Firm, P.C., representing the Duke family, started off by announcing the filing of a lawsuit against Bell, Boeing and Textron, the major contractors for the V-22. He spoke of the manufacturers negligence in manufacture and failure to test the aircraft adequately. Mr. Healy stated that the manufacturers knowingly delivered an unsafe aircraft.

Major Susan Duke, United States Army, sister of Jason Duke, spoke next. Major Duke recounted events in her brother's life and asked that the Panel look deeply into the V-22 program before making a decision.

Mr. Frank Jensen, Executive Director, Tour Operators Program Safety, was the final speaker. Mr. Jensen stated that he was speaking on behalf of himself as a long time rotorcraft aviator. He discussed the importance of tiltrotor technology and the need to continue its development.

The Panel made no comments during the proceedings, except to ask for copies of presentations that were not furnished in advance.


J. R. Dailey